

Isma lauds hudud bill postponement
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By Anisah Shukry

Muslim rights group Ikatan Muslimin Malaysia (Isma), which has campaigned for the implementation of hudud for all Malaysians, has welcomed PAS's decision to postpone tabling the private member's bill on the shariah penal code in Parliament.

"It's good that they are postponing it if it is because they wish to discuss further how to implement hudud in Kelantan," Isma president Abdullah Zaik Abdul Rahman told The Malaysian Insider in an immediate reaction to the announcement by PAS president Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang.

"Discussions are important so that the authorities can find the best method of enforcing hudud. I think that is the most important thing."

He added that such a move was wise and necessary, given the complications involved in the Islamic criminal law.

Last week, the Kelantan government had said that it wished to enforce hudud as early as next year.

It said the Islamic criminal law would not be applicable to non-Muslims in the state once enforced – a move with which Isma had disagreed.

Zaik had previously said that all Malaysians, regardless of faith, should be subjected to hudud for the country's "wellbeing", adding that criminals would then be fearful of committing crimes.

But PAS today decided to postpone the tabling of the bill this June to give sufficient time for a joint Putrajaya and Kelantan government technical committee to study the implementation of the Kelantan Shariah Penal Code II.

"The proposal to table the private member's bill in the Dewan Rakyat in June will not go ahead as scheduled," Hadi said in a statement.

Kelantan's hudud bill would have allowed the state government to enforce the Kelantan Shariah Penal Code II, which was passed in 1993 by the state assembly.

The state government made the decision because a significant part of hudud crimes like theft, robbery, rape, causing hurt and murder come under the federal government as stipulated in the Penal Code, as well as enforcement agencies, such as the police and prisons.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom had said that Putrajaya would back the state's move to implement hudud. But Barisan Nasional took some flak as its components – MCA and Gerakan – led the charge in opposing the planned bill.

It eventually led to Putrajaya forming the joint technical committee with the Kelantan government to examine all angles of hudud, and how it could be implemented in Malaysia, especially in Kelantan. – May 11, 2014.

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